

in the next few weeks when we make decisions that will shape the future of our great country into the 21st century, I'll try to keep her example in mind. And my challenge is that everyone else do the same. If we do, this great country is going to do just fine.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:24 p.m. in the Grand Ballroom at the Washington Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to former boxing champion Muhammad Ali and civil rights attorney Renee Gathers.

Remarks on the Middle East Peace Process

September 24, 1995

The President. Good morning. Not long ago, Israel and the Palestinians announced that they have reached a full agreement on implementing the next phase of the Declaration of Principles. This is a big step on the road to a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. And on behalf of the American people, I want to congratulate the negotiators and their leaders who continue to work and persevere and to prevail over the enemies of peace, including some who are willing to use terror to try to derail the peace process.

At the request of the parties, I have gladly agreed to host a signing ceremony at the White House on September 28th. We will also be inviting other regional leaders and, obviously, other interested parties who have to be involved in this—entire venture a success. But this is a good day for peace in the Middle East and a good omen for good steps in the future.

Q. What do you think the impact will be on the hope for a comprehensive Middle East peace between Israel and all of its Arab neighbors?

The President. I don't think it can be anything but positive. But we've learned from experience to take these things one at a time and to hammer out step-by-step progress and not to read too much into it. But I feel quite good about this; this is a major step. And as you know from your own observations, they have worked very hard over some very contentious issues that were quite difficult and complex. And I've been encouraged by what I've heard this morning about the progress that's been made.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:52 a.m. at Andrews Air Force Base, prior to his departure for Avoca, PA. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks on Arrival in Avoca, Pennsylvania

September 24, 1995

Thank you very much. Good morning, and thank you for coming out. I want to say, first of all, how very much I appreciate the kindness that so many of you have shown to my wife and to the members of our family. And if we ever cause an interruption in ordinary flow of life here when the Rodham family comes back to its roots, I apologize for that. But you can't imagine how much they all love it.

We're going back to Lake Winola today for the first time since our daughter was not quite

2 years old. So she doesn't have much of a memory of the first time we took her up there. We were talking about that this morning, getting ready to come up here.

Let me also give you a little good news. I'm sorry we're a few minutes late this morning, but I got up early this morning at the White House and was on the phone for a couple of hours because this morning, or morning our time, not very long ago, the Israelis and the Palestinians have reached agreement on the next

phase of their peace process. It's a big step forward toward ending the long, long state of siege in the Middle East. And on this day of worship, a thanksgiving for so many of us, I thought that would be a good way to get this Sunday off to the right kind of start.

I want to thank you also for the support that you have given to me and to our administration. We are doing everything we possibly can to try to lift up the values of work and family and freedom and responsibility and community in this country, to move the economy forward, to tackle the tough problems, and to bring the American people together.

And I am gratified that with all of our difficulties, we see the unemployment rate dropping, more jobs being created. The crime rate, believe it or not, now is going down in all 50 States. And we seem to be coming together again as a country and looking toward the future again.

And so I want to say that, for me at least, every day is an enormous opportunity as we go through this period of historic change for America's economy and in the whole world, to try to elevate the things that all of you live by day-in and day-out here, to try to restore economic opportunity where it was taken away in the 1980's, and to try to give people the opportunity to make the most of their own lives and families and communities the chance to solve their own problems and realize their own possibilities. It is a great honor, a great joy. And for every day you have given me to be your President, I thank you.

God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 10:55 a.m. at Wilkes-Barre/Scranton International Airport.

Remarks in a Question-and-Answer Session at the Godfrey Sperling Luncheon September 25, 1995

Godfrey Sperling. Well, Mr. President, what can I say, except it's wonderful to be over here. And as I've said before, in other times we've been at the White House, we'd love to have our breakfasts or lunches over here, maybe every week or two. Maybe Mike could work it out. [*Laughter*] But having said all that, we can get started. I hate to ask the President to sit down, but—[*laughter*]—

The President. Please, be seated, everyone.

Mr. Sperling. —that's what we do. Our ground rules—you've been to our breakfast before and lunch, whatever we want to call this today, and you know the ground rules; everything's on the record. And you've seen this bunch of rascals before, at least a few of them. And they haven't changed; they're the same ones that you've seen in the past. So I'm giving you a little warning.

So you all know, I understand there will be transcripts of this later in the afternoon. And beyond that, I just have to say welcome to you and thank you so much for coming to my 80th birthday.

The President. I'm glad to have you here. I would like to say just to begin that the Vice President and I are delighted to have you and your family here. It's a special day. Someone told me that you had done 2,800 of these now. And—

Mr. Sperling. Almost.

The President. I was trying to think of the significance of them. One of them is that I noticed from the breakfasts that I've been to, they are notoriously high cholesterol. And so you are—your very aging condition is a stunning rebuke to all of those who advocate healthy eating. [*Laughter*]

Mr. Sperling. I stay away from it.

The President. I don't know what the consequences of all that are, but it's a remarkable thing.

Let me also say, as you know, this is going to be a busy week around here. And you may have heard already, but in case you haven't, not too long ago, this morning, the Bosnian Government announced that they would participate in the resumption of the peace talks tomorrow in New York, which is very good news. And